



Preparing for the deployment of a parent

Communicating with children

Deployment is a stressful time for all family members, especially children.

Communicating with children during this time of uncertainty can help ease their stress.

Use the checklist below as a guide to help you and your family prepare for deployment.

AS A PARENT, I:

- ☐ Allow my children to ask questions and listen sensitively to their concerns.
- ☐ Show patience when my children ask the same questions and I repeat the same answers.
- ☐ Talk to my children about the changes to come for everyone.
- ☐ Encourage my children to share feelings through words, play, drawings, etc.
- ☐ Give open and honest answers to questions using words that my children understand.
- ☐ Am aware of my own emotional reactions around my children and do not rely on them for support.
- ☐ Remind my children and myself that separation can be a time for everyone to grow.
- ☐ Assure my children that the parent who is leaving will miss them every day and looks forward to returning.

AS A FAMILY, WE:

- ☐ Talk about why and when the parent is leaving and where the parent is going, if possible.
- ☐ Talk about when the parent will return, if possible.
- ☐ Talk about what it means to be on alert, if that is the status of the deploying parent.
- ☐ Create a plan to help our children communicate with the parent who will be away.
- ☐ Find some time to talk about feelings.
- ☐ Discuss ways to feel connected while the parent is away.
- ☐ Discuss the deployment with our children's teachers, childcare providers, and others so that they are aware.



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD
AND SEEING THINGS
FROM HIS OR HER POINT
OF VIEW.

[http://mfrc.calib.com/
healthy parenting](http://mfrc.calib.com/healthy parenting)